

ULYSSES LONG-TERM CARE HYGIENE PROGRAM

Ulysses home receives \$45K for dental care

By Kathy Hanks

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Residents of Western Prairie Care Home in Ulysses will soon have their teeth cleaned by a dental hygienist without leaving the privacy of their room, thanks to a grant by the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund.

The Health Fund awarded \$902,000 for health improvement projects in Kansas. The grants support efforts to increase access to health care, improve oral health, and promote healthy lifestyles through better nutrition and exercise.

The Ulysses long-term care home will use the \$45,000 grant to start a dental hygiene program that will have portable equipment, including a chair and X-ray equipment, which will be used for care onsite.

"Our residents rarely seek dental care," said Billie Upshaw, Western Prairie Care Home administrator. "It's a question of access more than anything."

Physical and cognitive problems make it more difficult to get to the dentist. Because of the grant, hygienists will keep the equipment in a box in their car and roll it into a resident's room.

Hygienists Angela Black and Mary Ellen Caldwell have both obtained extended care permits and will provide the dental hygiene care for the residents.

Upshaw said they plan to begin the program after the first of the year. While the program will be managed by Western Prairie Care Home, Upshaw hopes other nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the region will participate.

The program won't replace visits to the dentist but will get teeth cleanings and X-rays completed. When a dental visit is necessary, residents can go to the dentist and not have to wait very long.

Other grant recipients from the area include Prairie Star Health Center, Hutchinson. They received \$100,000 to expand dental care when they move to their new location next year. The Health Fund grant will be used when a dental clinic site opens at Health Ministries Clinic in Newton in 2007. The grant will be used for remodeling space and purchasing dental equipment.

Valley United Methodist Church, Marion, received a \$5,000 grant to help establish a health ministry program to serve the congregation and community.

**This Community Oral Health listserv
is designed to expand our knowledge, skills, and attitudes
about community oral health topics.**

Our goal: To keep Kansas residents cavity-free.

Please feel free to forward this posting to others.

**Through the generosity of the Life Span Institute at Parsons , University of
Kansas, Kansas dental professionals now have a listserv available to those
of us committed to community dental services.**

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